a village should have a minimum of 500 population; and if so, the justification thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI SURYAKANTA PATIL) : The Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana seeks to provide all-weather connectivity to all Unconnected habitations in the rural areas with a population of more than 500 persons, through good All-weather roads, by the end of Tenth Plan Period (2007). In respect of the Hill States (North-East, Sikkim, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Uttaranchal), Desert Areas and Tribal (Schedule-V) areas, the objective is to connect Habitations with a population of 250 persons and above. Habitations of population of 1000 or more get first priority followed by habitations of population of 500 or more followed, where eligible, by habitations of population of 250 or more.

**Demand raised by Chief Ministers for more funds for Rural Development**

864. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Chief Ministers demanded more funds for rural development in a meeting with Prime Minister on 29th June, 2004;

(b) if so, the reaction of Government thereto; and

(c) the additional funds to be released for Andhra Pradesh package for rural development?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI SURYAKANTA PATIL) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Central allocation of funds to the State Governments under the major rural development programmes are released on the basis of the poverty ratio estimated by the Planning Commission. The Central allocations of funds under rural development schemes have increased over the plan periods.

(c) There is no such proposal with the Ministry of Rural Development.